

Council Can Aid in Self-Preservation of City Taxpayers

AN EDITORIAL

"Our local taxpayers who are now faced with the problem of self-preservation because of the colossal defense programs being carried on by our Federal agencies, will have their backs broken and there will be a breakdown of city, county and state revenues UNLESS THE EXHAUSTIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE DECREASED TO SOMEWHAT OFFSET THE NEW WAR TAX LOAD."

So declared William C. Bonelli, member of the State Board of Equalization, in speaking last Friday at the meeting of the League of California Cities. The city of Torrance is a member of that league and it is to be hoped that some of our city councilmen were present because Bonelli was "speaking right down their alley."

"Our Federal government is searching every nook and cranny for additional revenue," Bonelli continued. "Federal agencies are being extended into new fields to render public service where state and local governments formerly functioned. Where such conditions develop, local governments must relieve tax situations by curtailing their services to avoid duplication and by reducing their revenues to relieve the overburdened local taxpayer."

That such action must be taken here in Torrance is indicated by this fact: First our municipal tax levy was INCREASED 10 cents for 1941-42 and we are still facing a deficit of more than \$37,000 this fiscal year. In representing this fact to the city council Jan. 28, City Clerk A. H. Bartlett warned: "This represents an expenditure of 10.4 per cent above the estimated revenue. According to state law we are not allowed to spend any amount in excess of the estimated revenue in any one fiscal year. It appears that we cannot continue to operate at such a great loss."

Pointing out that state income taxes should be reduced to somewhat offset the increases in Federal income taxes, Bonelli told the municipal officials: "We must not forget that taxes can be imposed periodically. Confiscation, whether it be wages, income or capital investment, can only take place once—then the goose is dead."

Even cursory knowledge of our municipal offices and their accomplishments makes it plain that, in addition to carrying a heavy tax load, Torrance property owners are also packing a great deal of governmental deadwood. Councilmen in charge of the various departments could cut departmental expenses considerably in all but the two essential units to our civic safety—police and fire departments. On the contrary there have been substantial increases in all but the city clerk's office and fire department.

If this trimming is accomplished, Torrance people should be informed of it at once. After all, they get plenty of bad news in the shape of war communiques, commodity restrictions, additional taxes and priorities. Good news in the form of curtailed municipal expenditures, clearance of top-heavy departments and a clear statement that the city council proposes judicial scrutiny of every request for appropriations would help all of us to "grin and bear it."

Aluminum Mill Bungling Scored in Frank Speech

In the past six months of government dilly-dallying over the location of the aluminum sheet mill, 80 million pounds of production has been lost—enough aluminum sheet to build more than 8,000 bombers. What would that many bombers mean to us at this moment? Thus spoke Carleton B. Tibbets, president of the Los Angeles County Chamber of Commerce before the 51st annual banquet of that organization late last week.

Because of his frankness and willingness to face facts regarding lack of production of war materials, The Herald and News is quoting below important excerpts from Tibbets' forceful address:

"We are gathered at a moment when our nation faces the greatest peril in its illustrious history. But most of the people of this country are not alive to this peril. On the contrary, they are gay and filled with laughter, for they have turned their backs on reality. Instead of facing the hard cold truths of a dreadful war they headline and repeat minor victories and play down major defeats and reassure themselves and are reassured by many of their leaders with such flimsy thoughts and comforts as: 'America has never yet lost a war. Therefore, she cannot lose this one.' 'Government, for several years, has assumed the responsibility of looking out for us so why should we as individuals worry?' 'We already have appropriated well over one hundred billion dollars for war. What other country can appropriate on any such scale as that?' 'We have nothing to fret'

(Continued on Page 5-A)

Sightseeing Ban Results in Mix-up

Just who was responsible for the traffic tie-up and resultant protests by Palo Verdians last Sunday when all roads leading into that community were barricaded by Torrance police on instructions from the State Highway Patrol is still uncertain today. But Police Chief John Stroh intends to ask for written orders in the future whenever such barriers are requested.

Palos Verdes residents complained last Sunday that the local police had prevented dinner guests and others from reaching their homes when officers halted almost all traffic leading into Palos Verdes from the Torrance area. After traffic piled up in Hollywood Riviera, Palos Verdes city police prevailed upon Torrance officers to let motorists through the barricade and permit the Palos Verdes officers to sort out those who had legitimate reasons for entering their area.

Chief Stroh said the barricade had been requested by State Highway Patrol officials who were acting in response to a primary request by the Army. He pointed out local officers were only doing their duty by stopping traffic from entering Palos Verdes—but the next time "it will be put in writing."

GET LEGAL COUNSEL
City Attorney John McCall was instructed to give legal assistance to the Civil Service Commission and, whenever given notice, attend meetings of that body as part of his official duties.

AVENUE PACT IN DISPUTE

City Engineer Glenn Jain reported to the city council Tuesday night that his efforts to speed the clearance of Cabrillo avenue's "center strip" right-of-way formerly owned by the Pacific Electric were being blocked by the railway company's "interpretation" of the agreement with the city about the removal of tracks and overhead wiring facilities.

Questioned by Councilman James Hitchcock on the progress of the proposed—for the past 10 years—improvement of Cabrillo, the city engineer said that his office is now preparing specifications preparatory to advertising for bids on removal of the P. E.'s property.

"But the contract covering the sale of the right-of-way to the city is being interpreted by P. E. officials in various fashions, none of them to the city's interest," Jain declared. "I want a definite decision on what we're to do and what the P. E. is to do in order to draft specifications that will prevent future bickering with the company over the job."

"We've got to know what part of the wiring we're to remove and how the tracks are to be taken up and already I've been informed that the P. E. might run against its union contract by allowing trains to run over the Cabrillo tracks to pick up the dismantled and uprooted rails," Jain told the council. "The Pacific Electric wants to charge us \$2,250 to remove the overhead and tracks."

The engineer received no specific instructions from the council but indicated he will continue his conferences with Pacific Electric officials on the matter.

FOUNDATION CONTRACT LET ALUMINUM EXTRUSION PLANT

Contract for construction of foundations for a large aluminum extrusion plant—second unit in the huge aluminum plants project to be built at Torrance—has been awarded to the P. J. Walker Co. of Los Angeles, it was announced this week by officials of the Defense Plant Corporation.

As published exclusively by this newspaper a month ago, ground will be broken for the extrusion plant within a few days, it was stated. It will be operated by the Bohn Aluminum & Brass Corporation of Detroit, and will process aluminum ingots supplied by Alcoa's \$18,000,000 alumina reduction plant now well under construction on the same 253-acre site located at 190th st. between Western and Normandie avenues.

Tubing, shapes and like products will be supplied by the extrusion plant for the aircraft and other defense industries. The reduction plant will be operated by the Aluminum Company of America, which already has a large staff here supervising the installation of machinery,

expected to be in production September 1.

The contract awarded to the P. J. Walker Co. was let on a cost-plus basis. While original plans called for a total investment of \$7,000,000 in the extrusion plant, well informed sources predict that this investment will be greatly increased in order to double the capacity of the plant from 6,000,000 pounds to 12,000,000 pounds annually.

Buildings of the extrusion plant, like those of the reduction unit, will be of blackout type with no windows and completely air conditioned. Plans for the buildings are under way in the offices of Stuchell & Buckheit, architects and engineers, of Detroit. Harold W. Buckheit will be remembered by industrial executives for his work in planning the huge River Rouge plant of the Ford Motor Company at Detroit.

Original plans for the extrusion plant called for buildings with 450,000 square feet of floor space, but it is expected that this will be materially increased if officials in Washington authorize doubling its capacity.

Chamber Quiz Seeking Civic Reaction Here

Emphasizing that "your opinions are important," the Committee of Fifteen chosen to effect a re-organization of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce sent out questionnaires to several hundred local citizens last week. Answers to pertinent questions regarding re-organization of a new type Chamber of Commerce and even if such a civic organization was desired, were sought through the survey, which was prepared for much thought on the part of the Committee, whose members were appointed by representative groups throughout the city.

In order that appropriate action may be started in response to the answers received from the civic quiz, those who have not already sent in their replies are urged to do so this week.

Since the political purge, prior to the recent councilmanic recall election when all tax funds were taken away from the Chamber, it has restricted its functions to routine affairs under the direction of Mrs. Marguerite Kelsey, as secretary, whose salary is being paid out of funds collected from members. However, these funds are rapidly being depleted, and if this city is to have a Chamber of Commerce some method of financing it will have to be found, it is pointed out.

Members of the Committee of Fifteen, under whose direction the survey is being conducted, include: Carleton Bell, chairman; Mrs. Lillian Barrington, temporary secretary; Dr. O. E. Fossum, Alden W. Smith, Robert McCallum, E. E. Murchison, Joe Pooler, Paul M. Watson, R. R. Smith, George Ruffolo, J. C. Smith, Mrs. Julia McManus, George Graham, Dean L. Sears and B. C. Buxton.

One More in City Election Campaign List

Mrs. Margaret Fordice, 1001 Serrano ave., was the only new entrant in the coming municipal election campaign this week. Mrs. Fordice filed her petition as a candidate for city treasurer. She has been a resident of Torrance for the past 18 years and at present is operating a dressmaking shop, which she intends to relinquish if elected, in order to devote her entire time to civic activities.

Other petitions filed, which were announced last week as being in circulation, include:

A. H. Bartlett for re-election as city clerk. He has held this office for the past 20 years—not as incorrectly printed in last week's issue as 12 years. Bartlett was first elected in 1922—the first year after the city's incorporation and succeeded Robert J. Deininger who was this city's first clerk, serving for one year.

Mrs. Harriett Leech, for re-election as city treasurer; Kenneth H. Kall, for re-election as councilman; and Frank Schmidt, for councilman.

James A. Evans has a petition out as a candidate for councilman but has not yet filed. Besides the city clerk and treasurer, two councilmanic terms are expiring, those of Councilmen James E. Hitchcock and Kenneth H. Kall. Hitchcock, who has been a member of the city council for the past ten years, has not yet announced whether he will run for re-election.

The election will be held April 14, and petitions must be filed by noon, March 14.

While petitions on two propositions are reported to be in circulation, it is not possible for them to qualify for the April 14 (Continued on Page 5-A)

PETITION JAP BAN IN CITY

Petitions, signed by several hundred local residents, demanding that this city be placed in a restricted zone from which Japanese forced out of other areas cannot enter and reside, were forwarded to Attorney-General Earl Warren this week. While no accurate figures could be obtained on the number of Japanese who have moved into Torrance from restricted areas, it is believed that at least 100 have settled here in the past two or three weeks.

Removal of all Japanese from Gardena valley to farm lands well inland was recommended to the county board of supervisors this week by Gardena's Civilian Defense Council. While the request was not an official statement of the city of Gardena, it was indicated that a majority of the city's officials concurred in it. The same approval has been given by Torrance city officials to the petitions circulated here last weekend.

After listing all the major industries located in Torrance and pointing out that "approximately 20 to 25 smaller factories are engaged in the manufacture of military supplies and equipment for the U. S. Army here," the Torrance petition states that the "General Petroleum Corporation has a large tank farm and refinery in the city and an \$18,000,000 aluminum plant is also in the course of erection here under government supervision.

Urge Immediate Action
"Because this city has not been placed in a restricted district, many Japanese are moving in on us. We feel that because of the existing situation, these Japanese are a menace to the security of the various industries engaged in war work and constitute an unnecessary hazard," the petition continues. "We respectfully request that you take steps to see that the city of Torrance and nearby territory in which these vital industries are located be placed in a restricted district forbidding Japanese to live therein, to protect the industries located here against sabotage and injury by the said Japanese."

"It is imperative that this be done at once to insure the safety of these institutions and their employees," the local petition concludes. "Local business men who circulated the petitions reported they had no difficulty whatever in securing signatures, one declaring: 'We could have obtained two or three thousand names to the petitions if we had continued the circulation for a week.'"

Martial Law Authority
Last Friday President Roosevelt authorized Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson to exclude all persons, whether citizens or aliens, from certain areas in the United States. The order was designed to give the War Department power to move from prescribed military areas any persons whose presence might hamper the American war effort. It is aimed particularly at American citizens of Japanese descent.

(Continued on Page 4-A)

Attack Object Still Mystery

By MICHAEL STRASZER

It was a great show and while "no bombs were dropped and no planes were shot down," according to the official Army report, yesterday morning's "incident" was a great practical lesson to everyone in this community on what to do in case of an air attack. It was a stupendous exhibition—anti-aircraft guns roared, searchlights swept the skies, air-raid sirens and whistles wailed—and it gave Civilian Defense officials and workers a grand dress rehearsal.

Torrance, Lomita and surrounding communities had "front row center" seats for the spectacle. While it was clearly evident that no aircraft soared over this vicinity, the blackout which was signaled at 2:38 a. m. was almost 100 per cent effective.

The Western Defense Command identified the object of the piercing searchlight beams as "unidentified aircraft." Just how many—if any—planes soared through the heavy ack-ack barrage will probably be never known. The Army's report is non-committal and falls to give convincing proof that any enemy planes were over the Los Angeles metropolitan area during the disturbance.

Those who have had time to analyze and think over what they saw—or thought they saw—arrive at one significant fact: "No bombs were dropped and no planes were shot down." But this fact does not dampen the tremendous upsurge of interest in civilian defense.

KNOX SAYS IT WAS "JUST FALSE ALARM"
Although the Army's western command continued to insist that unidentified aircraft had been reported, Secretary of Navy Frank Knox at a Washington press conference said that his information indicated it was "just a false alarm."

"There were no planes over Los Angeles, at least that's our understanding," Knox was quoted as saying. "None have been found and a very wide reconnaissance has been carried out." West coast officials, however, reiterated that the gigantic spectacle had not been staged "just for a preview of Fourth of July on the grand scale."

The Army stood by its guns today, reiterating there were "unidentified aircraft" in the skies while Angelenos clamored for more information about the cause for cannonading. Secretary Knox ascribed the "incident" to a case of metropolitan jitters which L. A. newspapers were quick to seize on as a prime example of long-range misjudgment.

RECORD OF AIR RAID SIGNALS
The public's all-too apparent apathy in regard to such volunteer services as air raid wardens, auxiliary police and firemen, first aid and other emergency posts diminished in the crescendo of ground fire and the rain of anti-aircraft shell fragments. Few of these landed in Torrance, Lomita and vicinity, although a cow at the Lester R. Quinn dairy on West 220th st. was grazed by shrapnel.

Here is the police record of the air raid signals—warnings that should be memorized by every resident:

8:15 p. m., Tuesday—Yellow (alert) warning received from the sheriff's sub-station; no public signal given as this is a "stand-by" call.
10:30 p. m.—Yellow signal recalled.
2:36 a. m., Wednesday—Red (air raid) alarm received; Torrance fire department siren starts to scream and blows a fuse; warning given by two-minute undulating or off-and-on whistle blasts from Hydril, General Petroleum, National Supply and Columbia Steel.
7:32 a. m.—"All-clear" report received from sheriff's sub-station and immediately changed to the "yellow" alert.
7:45 a. m.—"All-clear" comes through and whistles sound uninterruptedly for one full minute.

SERIOUS ASPECTS OF FIVE-HOUR ALARM
In between 2:36 and 7:45 a. m., the big show that awakened hundreds here and thousands of excited Angelenos went on while Civilian Defense agencies swung into their stride with a precision that won the highest admiration of their leaders and such regular authorities as the police and fire departments and sheriff's office.

In Torrance the regular police were kept busy responding to radioed instructions about lights being visible in the outlying districts—particularly, according to Police Chief John Stroh, in dairy farms. Torrance business men, following instructions they had received only a day or two before, had their stores dark. Only in two instances were police forced to "jimmy" doors to get at lights left burning.

Though it lacked bombs or shot-down planes, the five-hour alarm had its more serious aspects here. Strange flares and lights were observed along the coast and in Palos Verdes Hills and these were promptly investigated if in Torrance territory or called to the attention of sheriff and F. B. I. authorities.

No arrests were made here, although when one resident angrily refused an air raid warden's request to douse some lights police were dispatched to his home with instructions to "turn 'em out for him and bring him in." When officers arrived they found the lights out.

There were a large number of reports received by police about illuminated house numbers being left on during the blackout. It would be well if householders would remove the globe (Continued on Page 4-A)

FIRST AIDERS TO MOBILIZE

An emergency meeting of all First Aid workers, including those now attending classes but not those members of the Auxiliary Police unit, will be held Monday night, March 2, at 7 o'clock at the Red Cross headquarters on Cravens ave., across from the fire station.

Purpose of this vital meeting is to organize the First Aid Detachment into working field units, according to Commander Casper Cramer.

AIR RAID WARNING — Two-minute undulating siren blast — or intermittent horn blasts lasting two minutes

ALL CLEAR — Two-minute siren or horn of even pitch